S. 2149

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2149, a bill to exclude from consumer credit reports medical debt that has been in collection and has been fully paid or settled, and for other purposes.

S. 2165

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2165, a bill to enhance strategic cooperation between the United States and Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 2192

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUYE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2192, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the participation of optometrists in the National Health Service Corps scholarship and loan repayment programs, and for other purposes.

S. 2219

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2219, a bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to provide for additional disclosure requirements for corporations, labor organizations, Super PACs and other entities, and for other purposes.

S. 2235

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2235, a bill to prohibit the establishment by air carriers and airport operators of expedited lines at airport screening checkpoints for specific categories of passengers, and for other purposes.

S. 2282

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2282, a bill to extend the authorization of appropriations to carry out approved wetlands conservation projects under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act through fiscal year 2017.

S. 2371

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2371, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to permit employers to pay higher wages to their employees.

S. 3085

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3085, a bill to provide for the expansion of affordable refinancing of mortgages held by the Federal National Mortgage Association and the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation.

S. 3199

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 3199, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to stimulate international tourism to the United States and for other purposes.

S. 3204

At the request of Mr. JOHANNS, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3204, a bill to address fee disclosure requirements under the Electronic Fund Transfer Act, and for other purposes.

S. 3220

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3220, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

S. 3221

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3221, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to permit employers to pay higher wages to their employees.

S. 3236

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3236, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the protection and enforcement of employment and reemployment rights of members of the uniformed services, and for other purposes.

S. 3239

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3239, a bill to provide for a uniform national standard for the housing and treatment of egg-laying hens, and for other purposes.

S. 3257

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3257, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prohibit the use of public funds for political party conventions, and to provide for the return of previously distributed funds for deficit reduction.

S. RES. 448

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 448, a resolution recognizing the 100th anniversary of Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. BOXER (for herself and Ms. SNOWE):

S. 3263. A bill to require the Secretary of Transportation to modify the final rule relating to flightcrew member duty and rest requirements for passenger operations of air carriers to apply to all-cargo operations of air carriers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I am proud to join my colleague Senator SNOWE in once am introducing legislation to improve aviation safety.

The Safe Skies Act we are introducing today will close a loophole in the Department of Transportation's recent rule on pilot fatigue, and ensure that pilots of cargo planes are just as well rested and prepared for their important work as the pilots of passenger planes who they share airports and airways with.

Following the tragic crash of Flight 3407 in 2009, Senator SNOWE and I introduced legislation to address several important aviation safety issues, including the need to update pilot fatigue regulations to reflect new, scientific research.

Under the new rule issued by the Department of Transportation, pilots of passenger planes will be limited to flying eight or nine hours, depending on the start time. Minimum rest periods will be 10 hours, with the opportunity for eight hours of uninterrupted sleep.

Unfortunately, cargo pilots were left out of the rule—which undermines the one level of safety we are trying to achieve in our airline industry.

Current rules regarding cargo flight operations permit cargo pilots to be on duty as many as 16 hours during a 24-hour period, regardless of when they begin their shift. Compared to passenger pilots, cargo pilots are permitted to fly 60 percent more hours—as much as 48 hours in a 6-day period.

Keeping cargo pilots out of the improved flight and duty time regulations does not make sense; they too need rest in order to safely perform their jobs. And the safety of our skies depends on all pilots performing well.

This legislation directs the Secretary of Transportation to apply the same flight and duty time regulations for pilots of passenger planes to cargo pilots as well. This bill is supported by the Airline Pilots Association, the Independent Pilots Association and the Coalition of Airline Pilots Associations, and has been championed in the House by Representatives CHIP CRAVAACK and TIMOTHY H. BISHOP.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this legislation as part of our ongoing efforts to improve the safety of our Nation's aviation system.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 3265. A bill to amend the Federal Power Act to remove the authority of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to collect land use fees for land that has been sold, exchanged, or otherwise transferred from Federal ownership but that is subject to a power site reservation; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, we often hear refrains of the need to make government policies more fair, clear, or simple—especially when these policies involve the collection of fees or taxes. Today I rise to introduce legislation to fix an inherently unfair policy by prohibiting the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission from charging land-use fees for hydropower projects that are no longer located on federal land.

FERC is responsible for licensing private, municipal and state hydropower projects. Pursuant to the Federal Power Act, the Commission is authorized to collect fees from project owners for those hydro projects located on federal lands. The rationale behind these land-use fees is to recompense the United States for the ''use, occupancy, or enjoyment'' of its federal lands. The Federal Government is, in some sense, a landlord for these types of projects, and can collect just and reasonable rent from its tenants. The current level of these rents is a separate issue—which I encourage all of my colleagues to examine as well since FERC is seeking to change its collection methodology and increase those fees—but today I am focused on how a technicality in federal law allows the government to continue to collect land-use fees even when the land at issue has been transferred out of federal ownership. Under current law, if the Federal Government sold the land underneath a hydropower project to the operator, or transferred it into state ownership, FERC would continue to assess full land use fees against the operator. This untenable situation is like a landlord continuing to collect rent from a tenant even after the tenant buys the house outright!

While the inherent unfairness of such a scenario is clear, the statutory and regulatory web that has created this snare is extremely complex. In addition to allowing for the collection of federal land-use fees, the Federal Power Act also contains a section regarding Power Site Classifications, or PSCs. A PSC attaches to the land when a preliminary hydropower license application is made, and entitles the government, or its designees, to enter the associated land and develop a hydropower project if some other person or operation is occupying it. These classifications are similar to easements, in that they permanently attach to the title of the lands. The purpose of PSCs is to make sure that hydropower can be developed in the limited number of areas on federal land that are suitable, and furthermore that once such an area is identified by a preliminary application, that the site is not then diverted to an alternate use.

However, FERC has interpreted the statutory fee collection provisions to give these PSCs another affect that is not in keeping with this purpose—to charge land-use fees from existing hydropower operators in cases where the Federal Government no longer owns the land. In such a case, there is no need for a PSC to preserve the hydropower value of land as it is already being used for power production. Nor is the Federal Government somehow missing out on other beneficial uses of the land, because it no longer owns the land at issue. But FERC's current interpretation of the FPA is that a PSC qualifies as a significant enough interest in the associated land to justify the collection of full land-use fees.

When I first learned of this issue, I asked FERC for a list of the hydropower projects for which it was collecting these PSC-based federal land-use fees. Apparently, while FERC has been perfectly capable of collecting these fees, it has been less diligent in keeping track of which projects are located on lands that 2 have since been transferred away from federal ownership. Despite numerous requests from my office, FERC was unable to produce even a possible list of impacted projects. Consequently, my staff attempted to survey the number of affected projects by consulting with both the National Hydropower Association and the Alaska Power Association. This search identified 15 possible projects subject to these PSC land use fee collections—10 of which are located in my home state of Alaska. While some may dismiss these fees as being relatively minor, I can tell you that these annual federal fees for land not even owned by the Federal Government can represent a significant hardship for my constituents.

The bill I am introducing today would put a halt to this kind of fee collection. It simply says that when FERC is making fee determinations, it cannot take PSCs into account. Therefore, the only land that the Federal Government will be able to collect ''use, occupancy, and enjoyment'' fees is for land that it actually owns. I hope all of my colleagues can agree this treatment is a fair resolution of the issue and I ask for their support.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 3265

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. REMOVAL OF AUTHORITY TO COLLECT LAND USE FEES FOR CERTAIN LAND.

Section 10(e)(1) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 803(e)(1)) is amended in the first sentence by inserting after ''enjoyment of its lands or other property'' the following: ''(which, for purposes of this section, shall not include land that has been sold, exchanged, or otherwise transferred from Federal ownership, but that is subject to a power site reservation under section 24)''.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 477—CALLING FOR THE SAFE AND IMMEDIATE RETURN OF NOOR AND RAMSAY BOWER TO THE UNITED STATES

Mr. KERRY (for himself and Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 477

Whereas Colin Bower's 2 young sons, Noor and Ramsay Bower, were illegally abducted from the United States by their mother in August 2009 and taken to Egypt;

Whereas Noor William Noble Bower, age 11, and Ramsay Maclean Bower, age 9, are citizens of the United States of America;

Whereas, on December 1, 2008, prior to the abduction of Noor and Ramsay, the Probate and Family Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts awarded sole legal custody of Noor and Ramsay to Colin Bower, and joint physical custody with Mirvat el Nady, which ruling stipulated Mirvat el Nady was not to remove Noor and Ramsay from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts;

Whereas, in August of 2009, following a violation of the Probate Court's ruling, the Massachusetts Trial Court granted sole physical custody of Noor and Ramsay to their father, Colin Bower;

Whereas Colin Bower has been granted only 4 visitations with his sons in the almost 3 years since the abduction;

Whereas the United States has expressed its commitment, through the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, done at the Hague October 25, 1980, ''to protect children internationally from the harmful effects of their wrongful removal or retention and to establish procedures to ensure their prompt return to the State of their habitual residence''; and

Whereas the United States and 69 other countries that are partners to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of international Child Abduction have agreed, and encourage all other countries to concur, that the appropriate court for determining the best interests of children in custody matters is the court in the country of their habitual residence: Now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Senate calls on government officials and competent courts in Egypt to assist in the safe and immediate return of Noor and Ramsay Bower to the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 478—COMMEMORATING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHARTERING OF HAMILTON COLLEGE IN CLINTON, NEW YORK

Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. SANDERS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 478

Whereas Hamilton College, located in Clinton, New York, received its charter from the Regents of the University of the State of New York on May 26, 1812, ''for the instruction and education of youth, in the learned languages and liberal arts and sciences'';

Whereas Hamilton College was originally founded in 1793 as the Hamilton-Oneida Academy by the Reverend Samuel Kirkland, a missionary to the Oneida Indians;

Whereas all-male Hamilton College joined with all-female Kirkland College in 1978 to